

which man has been responsible. Until just a few dozen years ago the idea of most people was that there was no end to the supply of forests; they needed no protection, no care, no attention. The common practice by farmers and lumbermen was to cut the good trees and burn everything else that would burn, not once, but year after year.

But for a few early ardent forest conservationists this kind of thinking probably, would have existed even until today. For many years a small group has been pounding home the fact that our original forests will not last forever, that we must protect from fire and restore our woodlands if future needs are to be met. The new idea has made considerable progress.

More and more the people are becoming forest fire conscious and realize more than ever before how everyone loses when wild fires rage over our lands.

There is much more to be done, however, in the matter of fire prevention. During the year 1951 there were 3,377 forest fires in North Carolina which burned over approximately 164,775 acres. It is evident that almost all of them were started directly or indirectly by man. This fact indicates a great need for continuing an all-out effort to get people to be more conscious of our forest resources and more careful. The three chief causes were: Brush burning, incendiary and smokers. These three causes accounted for 71 percent of all fires.

Even though all of our people do become forest fire conscious there will always be danger of tremendous damage from wild fires. For this reason the Department of Conservation and Development is doing its best to develop a state-wide system of detecting and suppressing such fires.

FIRE LOOK-OUT TOWERS

The first requirement of a good fire control program is a system of lookout points whereby fires can be located effectively. The first ambition of all people interested in our forests is to *prevent* fires from starting, but once a fire starts, the fire control men are eager to locate it and confine its damage to as small an acreage as possible. Generally speaking, small forest fires are comparatively easy